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Sens. Allen and Stamas promote northern Michigan on second annual Snowmobile the North Tour

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LANSING – Legislative leaders from around the state plan to explore northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula via snowmobiles next month, witnessing firsthand the economic impact created by winter tourism. State Sens. Jason Allen and Tony Stamas will spearhead the tour.

"I had a great time on the snowmobile tour last year visiting a number of locations throughout the 37th Senate District and the rest of the Upper Peninsula," said Allen, R-Traverse City. "Snowmobiling is one of the hallmarks of the winter tourism season, I look forward to joining my fellow legislators to experience the winter wonderland of northern Michigan."

Beginning and ending in Gaylord, the tour kicks off Monday, Jan. 3, 2005 and spans more than 600 miles and both the Upper and Lower Peninsulas before wrapping up Thursday, Jan. 6. Throughout the week, the pair and fellow legislators will visit Alba, Mackinaw City, Trout Lake, Sault Ste. Marie, Cheboygan, Alpena, Lachine, Hillman, Atlanta, and Lewiston before returning to Gaylord.

Joining Allen and Stamas will be outgoing Speaker of the House Rick Johnson, Speaker Elect Craig DeRoche, Rep. Tom Casperson, Rep. Elect Kevin Elsenheimer and Michigan Snowmobile Association President Rick Brown.

"I am really looking forward to going on the snowmobile tour and seeing the significant economic impact winter tourism has on northern Michigan," said Stamas, R-Midland. "Michigan is beautiful during all four seasons, but winter is a time for snowmobile enthusiasts to enjoy what Michigan has to offer."

The following week marks Snowmobile Safety Week. Michigan has more than 6,000 miles of groomed trails offering exciting terrain of forest and field to both residents and visitors. With almost 400,000 registered snowmobiles, contributing over \$1 billion to the state economy, safe and responsible driving is essential for every enthusiast on a sled.